

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY

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STADIS//////////

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, PDIP, MP, US

SUBJECT: PL-480 TITLE I FOR MAURITIUS

REF: 77 PORT LOUIS 1204

1. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN WORKING IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSAL YOU MADE IN REFTEL THAT A PL-480 TITLE I PROGRAM BE INITIATED FOR MAURITIUS IN FY 78.

2. WE NOW CONSIDER IT A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT EITHER WHEAT FLOUR OR RICE, WITH A VALUE OF ABOUT \$1 MILLION, COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR MAURITIUS IN FY 78. THE DISCUSSION IN PARA 8 (F) OF YOUR MESSAGE SUGGESTS A FULL AWARENESS OF THE REQUIREMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MET FOR INITIATION OF SUCH A PROGRAM, AND WE SHARE YOUR BELIEF THAT A TITLE I PROGRAM CAN BE JUSTIFIED.

3. THE ONE ESSENTIAL ITEM THAT IS MISSING AT THIS STAGE IS AN INDICATION OF MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT INTEREST IN A TITLE I PROGRAM. WITH SUCH AN INDICATION IN HAND, WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SEEK INFORMAL REACTION FROM THE

INTERAGENCY STAFF COMMITTEE ON PL-480, WHICH COULD TAKE THE MATTER UP AS EARLY AS THE END OF JANUARY.

4. IF THE ISC REACTION IS POSITIVE, IT WOULD THEN BE ADVISABLE FOR YOU TO INVITE THE REGIONAL FOOD FOR PEACE OFFICER TO VISIT MAURITIUS TO ASSIST YOU IN GENERATING A FORMAL GOM REQUEST WITH SUPPORTING DATA, ALONG WITH THE EMBASSY'S SUPPORTING RECOMMENDATION AND ANALYSIS. A REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF PL-480 IN THE CONTEXT OF MAURITIAN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS WOULD ALSO BE REQUIRED. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF THE GOM REQUEST AND THE EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION, THERE WOULD BE FORMAL CONSIDERATION OF THE PROGRAM BY THE ISC. IF THE PROGRAM IS APPROVED, THE EMBASSY WOULD THEN RECEIVE NEGOTIATING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT. THE AGREEMENT WOULD, AS YOU KNOW, PROVIDE FOR A USUAL MARKETING REQUIREMENT AND WOULD ALSO INCLUDE SELF-HELP MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOM IN ORDER TO INCREASE FOOD PRODUCTION. PROVISION WOULD ALSO BE MADE IN THE AGREEMENT FOR COMMITMENT OF THE RUPEE PROCEEDS OF THE SALE TO JOINTLY-AGREED DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS.

5. MOST FAVORABLE POSSIBLE TERMS ARE 40 YEARS AT 2 PERCENT DURING 10 YEAR GRACE PERIOD AND 3 PERCENT THEREAFTER. MAURITIUS, HOWEVER, IS UNLIKELY TO RECEIVE MOST CONCESSIONAL TERMS, BECAUSE OF ITS HIGH PER CAPITA INCOME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LEVEL. REPAYMENT TERMS ARE NEVERTHELESS LIKELY TO BE MORE THAN 20 YEARS. NORMALLY INITIAL PAYMENT OF FIVE PERCENT IS REQUIRED, AND SHIPPING COSTS ARE ALSO THE BUYER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

6. DEPARTMENT IS AWARE THAT GOING TO GOM TO SOUND OUT INTEREST IN TITLE I AND LATER TO SECURE AN OFFICIAL REQUEST WOULD VIOLATE THE "PACKAGE" PRINCIPLE REFERRED TO IN REFTEL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS IS BOTH A MAJOR ITEM IN THE PACKAGE AND NOT THE ONLY ONE. IT WOULD THEREFORE SEEM DESIRABLE TO GET THE PL-480 PROCESS MOVING ASAP, TO GIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE CHANCE OF ACTUALLY INITIATING A PROGRAM DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR. THIS IN TURN WOULD STRENGTHEN MAURITIAN CHANCES FOR A TITLE I ALLOCATION IN FY 79.

7. IF YOU AGREE THAT THE GOM SHOULD BE APPROACHED NOW, INFORMATION IN PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5 MAY BE USED TO SET TERMS OF REFERENCE. YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT THE SPECIFIC TERMS OF AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE NEGOTIATED AFTER PROGRAM APPROVAL. VANCE

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